

DRAFT

1/22/03 Neighborhood Meeting Avocado Heights

The Department of Regional Planning held a neighborhood meeting at the Sunkist Public Library on the evening of January 22nd to discuss ZC/CUP 02-094 (1), an application to establish the operation of a pallet storage and repair facility located at 126 S. 2nd Ave. Property owners within a 500 ft. radius from the subject property were notified about the meeting, of which approximately 20 attended. Members of the Avocado Heights Planning Advisory Committee (PAC) were also invited to participate. Five PAC members were in attendance. Three staff members from DRP attended: Maria Masis, from Zoning Permits, Sorin Alexanian from Community Studies I, and Adrine Arakelian also from Community Studies I. Nicole England, from the First Supervisorial District, was also in attendance.

The meeting began with introductions and an explanation of the meeting objectives by Mr. Alexanian. Ms. Masis made a presentation describing the project details, followed by Ms. Gutierrez, the applicant. Ms. Gutierrez stated that she purchased the property in December of 2001. She described the process of cleaning the property, which was kept as a junkyard for many years. She then described how she plans to use and maintain the property. She displayed a revised plot plan, stated that the repair facility would be at the back of the property, 300 ft. from the street, and that it would be enclosed. Her hours of operation would be from 8 am to 5 pm Monday through Friday with cleaning of the property and other miscellaneous tasks on Saturday morning and afternoon. She also received signatures from neighboring property owners in support of her project. There would be landscaping in the front of her property, electric gates, and sufficient on-site parking for trucks and employee vehicles. Ms. Gutierrez's presentation was followed by a question and answer period. The following is a list of concerns voiced by meeting attendees and responses by staff and the applicant indicating possible ways to address the concerns .

1. *Concern:* Loading/unloading taking place in the street.
Response: Staff responded that loading/unloading taking place in the street is a violation of the County code. Ms. Gutierrez also responded that she will have sufficient parking for the loading/unloading of trucks on-site.
2. *Concern:* The pallet yard will be adding more traffic to 2nd Ave. The auto body shop at the corner already has its cars parked along 2nd Ave. and Mackenzie Ct.
Response: Ms. Gutierrez responded that she has 2 flat bed trucks for her business and anticipates that only a few trips per day will be

made by her trucks to either pick up or drop off pallets. Staff stated that conditions can be included in the CUP to limit the number of entry/exits onto the property. Ms. Englund also responded that the County will look into the parking of commercial vehicles on 2nd Ave. with the objective of placing appropriate signs to deter such activity.

3. *Concern:* Noise from pallet repair equipment and forklifts.
Response: Ms. Gutierrez stated that the repair facility will be enclosed and soundproofed to meet County regulations. The equipment used will also be soundproofed. She will have 2-3 forklifts in operation, but her hours of operation will be from 8am-5pm Monday through Friday. The County sound engineer also gave the project clearance and measured the noise level from her operation to be below the ambient noise level.
4. *Concern:* Will people be coming by the pallet yard to sell pallets?
Response: Ms. Gutierrez explained that no one will be coming by her property to sell pallets. She also explained that her business is family run, her and her husband do most of the work and as a result have complete control over what occurs on the property.
5. *Concern:* All the pallet yards in the area stack the pallets very high and the pallets are visible from a good distance away. The properties are not well maintained either.
Response: Ms. Gutierrez stated that she takes pride in ownership and would not maintain her property as a junkyard or allow it to be an eyesore. Staff also explained that Ms. Gutierrez will be required to operate in compliance with a conditional use permit (CUP) which states, as a condition, that pallets shall not be visible from residential streets. The CUP also includes a condition requiring an 8 ft. masonry wall along the southern and eastern property lines and that the front setback area be landscaped. Other pallet yards in the area do not operate under a CUP.
6. *Concern:* Trucks backing into or out of property.
Response: Staff stated that a condition requiring all trucks to enter and exit head forward could be included in the CUP, as well as, setting aside an area of her property designated as a turnabout for trucks.
7. *Concern:* What if the business expands and larger trucks are needed for the operation of the pallet yard.

- Response:* A condition can be included in the CUP stating the maximum size and number of trucks to be used. The applicant is also limited in the number of trucks owned by the amount of on-site parking.
8. *Concern:* Truck traffic on 2nd Ave. and onto Mackenzie Ct. Trucks frequently turn into 2nd Ave. by accident, unaware that it is a dead end street and then make u-turns either at the end of the street or at Mackenzie Ct. There is currently a sign that states “No Outlet” but it is 10-15 ft. away from the street corner.
- Response:* Ms. Gutierrez stated that her trucks would have no reason to go any further than her property on 2nd Ave. and would be able to turn on her property, so they would have no reason to make a u-turn on the street. Ms. Englund stated that she will direct Public Works to look into placing appropriate signs to deter trucks from coming into 2nd Ave.
9. *Concern:* Will there be manufacturing of pallets?
- Response:* Ms. Gutierrez explained that the process of repairing a pallet is the same as making a pallet from scratch and require the same equipment and materials. While she may be making some pallets, the majority of her work will be in repairing pallets.
10. *Concern:* Will there be portable toilets on the property?
- Response:* As a condition of the CUP as originally proposed, no portable toilets will be allowed on the property. Ms. Gutierrez stated that an office with restroom facilities will be constructed.
11. *Concern:* Will the zone change allow other, potentially more disturbing, industrial uses to be established on the property in the future?
- Response:* Because the use will be operating under a CUP, the establishment of any other industrial uses would require a new public hearing and the approval of a new CUP. Even if the property owner chooses to sell the property as a pallet facility, the new owner will be required to operate under the previous CUP conditions as they will be recorded.
12. *Concern:* The existing businesses on the corner of 2nd Ave. and Valley Blvd. are the real and current problem for the residences on 2nd Ave. Can this problem be fixed before the pallet facility is established, if so the residences would not be as opposed to the establishment of the pallet facility. Residences don’t see the pallet facility as a major problem, so much as the auto body use on the corner, the frequency of trucks making wrong

turns onto the street, and the problem of cars being parked on 2nd Ave. for businesses on Valley Blvd.

Response: Ms Gutierrez reiterated that her trucks would not be parked on 2nd Ave., that the number of trips to/from her business would be approximately 4/day, and she did not understand why she had to be punished for the wrongs that others are committing. Staff responded that they will contact Public Works and see what can be done about the parking problems as far as sign posting and regulation, as well as other code violations of the existing businesses.

Mr. Alexanian concluded the meeting by stating that a summary of the meeting, which will be reported to the Regional Planning Commission (RPC), as well as the staff report to the RPC will be made available on the DRP web site on Thursday, February 6, 2003. He also reminded the meeting attendees that the continued public hearing for the Avocado Heights Zoning Study, as well as the RPC discussion of ZC/CUP 02-094, will be taking place on February 12, 2003.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 pm.